

Message Text

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11

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TO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

INFO AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

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SUBJ: PROPOSAL FOR ABIDJAN REGIONAL TECHNICAL TRAINING
INSTITUTE

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PROPOSED PRESS RELEASE BY OPIC ON
TRAINING CENTER STUDY. WOULD APPRECIATE POST'S COMMENTS
AND APPROVAL. IF EMBASSY DEEMS THAT GOIC CLEARANCE RE-
QUIRED PRIOR TO RELEASE, THAT SHOULD BE OBTAINED.

2. INFO ADDRESSEES WILL BE ADVISED AS STUDY PROGRESSES.
OUR EMBASSIES IN COUNTRIES INCLUDED IN STUDY WILL BE RE-
QUESTED TO PROVIDE FACULTATIVE SERVICES TO THOSE CARRYING
OUT STUDY.

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3. BEGIN TEXT: WASHINGTON, D. C., NOVEMBER -- -- THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION AND FIVE LEADING U.S. COMPANIES WILL ASSUME JOINT FINANCIAL SPONSORSHIP OF A COMPREHENSIVE MARKET RESEARCH STUDY OF THE IVORY COAST AND SIX OTHER FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES OF WEST AFRICA, ACCORDING TO AN ANNOUNCEMENT BY MARSHALL T. MAYS, PRESIDENT OF THE GOVERNMENT AGENCY WHICH OFFERS INCENTIVE PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE PRIVATE U.S. INVESTMENT IN THE DEVELOPING NATIONS OF THE WORLD.

4. THE PROPOSED PROJECT, WHICH HAS THE FULL APPROVAL AND ACTIVE SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT FELIX HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AND THE IVORY COAST GOVERNMENT, WAS CONCEIVED BY CONGRESSMAN

GUY VANDER JAGT DURING A VISIT TO THAT COUNTRY AS PRESIDENT NIXON'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE ON TRADE AND INVESTMENT IN AFRICA. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH MOHAMMED DIAWARA, MINISTER OF PLANNING FOR THE IVORY COAST, AND WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF U.S. CORPORATIONS IN THE COUNTRY, CONGRESSMAN VANDER JAGT LEARNED THAT THE AREA'S MOST IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTAL NEED WAS FOR THE CREATION OF A MECHANISM TO TRANSMIT AMERICAN KNOW-HOW AND TECHNOLOGY TO AFRICANS.

5. "MANY OF THESE NTIONS ARE RICH IN HUMAN AND NATURAL RESOURCES," CONGRESSMAN VANDER JAGT SAYS, "BUT THEY HAVE HAD LITTLE CHANCE TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE OF THE TECHNIQUES NEEDED TO MEET THE COMPETITION OT TODAY'S WORLD. THE ULTIMATE ANSWER TO A PROBLEM OF THIS KIND IS TO SET UP A TRAINING CENTER SPONSORED AND MANAGED BY PRIVATE CORPORATIONS WHICH HAVE AN INTEREST IN ESTABLISHING THEMSELVES IN THE AFRICAN MARKET. BUT A NECESSARY FIRST STEP TO ATTRACT PRIVATE SUPPORT IS TO DETERMINE THE SIZE AND POTENTIAL OF THE MARKET INVOLVED AS IT RELATES TO U.S. PRODUCTS, AND WHETHER SUCH A TRAINING FACILITY WOULD FILL THE HOST COUNTRY'S NEEDS. IT IS HERE THAT THE GOVERNMENT CAN PROVIDE THE NECESSARY LEADERSHIP THROUGH THE OVERSEAS PRIVATE INVESTMENT CORPORATION WHOSE MANDATE MAKES IT THE IDEAL VEHICLE TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR BRINGING THE COMBINED RESOURCES OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS TO BEAR ON THE PROBLEM. THE FAVORABLE RESPONSE ON THE PART OF THE PRIVATE COMPANIES APPROACHED WAS IMMEDIATE, AND WE LOOK FOR PROMPT UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION ON WHAT COULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT YET UNDERTAKEN BY THE UNITED STATES IN AFRICA."

6. UNDER THE PLAN, OPIC WILL PROVIDE ONE-HALF OF THE FUNDING FOR THE RESEARCH STUDY, NOT TO EXCEED DOLS 100,000 IN TOTAL COST, AND THE FIVE PARTICIPATING CORPORATIONS WILL UNDERWRITE THE REMAINDER. THE COMPANIES INCLUDE REIGEL TEXTILE CORPORATION; GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION; UNION

CARBIDE CORPORATION, GENERAL TELEPHONE, ELECTRONICS CORPORATION AND GENERAL ELECTRIC CORPORATION.

7. FOR ITS PART, THE GOVERNMENT OF THE IVORY COAST HAS PLEDGED TO FURNISH WHATEVER LAND AND BUILDINGS WOULD BE NECESSARY FOR THE PROPOSED TRAINING CENTER, AND TO LEND THE PROJECT ITS CONTINUING SUPPORT- JOHN F. ROOT, U. S. AMBASSADOR TO ABIDJAN, CALLED THE CONCEPT "A TRULY CREATIVE VEHICLE FOR BUILDING A BRIDGE OF FRIENDSHIP AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE DEVELOPING NATIONS OF FRANCOPHONE AFRICA. THIS WILL ENABLE THESE YOUNG NATIONS TO HELP THEMSELVES THROUGH THE ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS THEY WILL NEED TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE," HE SAID.

8. THE TERM "FRANCOPHONE" IS USED TO DESIGNATE THE FRENCH-SPEAKING NATIONS OF AFRICA; IN ADDITION TO THE IVORY COAST, THE PROJECT WILL COVER MALI, UPPER VOLTA, NIGER, TOGO, SENEGAL, AND DAHOMEY. THE SEVEN NATIONS COMPRISE AN AREA OF 1.3 MILLION SQUARE MILES, ROUGHLY ONE-THIRD THE SIZE OF THE U.S.

9. MR. MAYS SAID THAT THE ORGANIZATION OF THE RESEARCH TEAM ALREADY HAS BEEN STARTED WITH THE HELP OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE SERVICES CORPS, A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION, PARTIALLY FUNDED BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND MANAGED BY SENIOR BUSINESS EXECUTIVES, WHICH PROVIDES MANAGEMENT COUNSELLING AND ON-THE-SPOT SERVICES FOR ENTERPRISES IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THE IESC WAS FORMED IN 1965, AND DEALS WITH SOME 600 PROJECTS ANNUALLY. IN ALL, IT HAS COMPLETED 2,900 PROJECTS IN 48 COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA, AFRICA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA.

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10. "WE WILL FORM A TEAM OF EXPERTS WHO CAN MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE INFORMATION ASSEMBLED ABOUT THE VARIOUS NATIONS IN THE AREA IS ACCURATE," HE SAID. "WE BELIEVE THAT THE SURVEY WILL DEFINE A MARKET WHICH IS AT ONCE VIABLE AND ONE OF POTENTIAL STEADY GROWTH, BUT IF THE FACTS INDICATE THAT SOME OTHER DIRECTION SHOULD BE TAKEN, WE WILL SEEK TO DEVELOP WORKABLE ALTERNATIVES."

11. MR. MAYS SAID THAT PRESENT PLANS CALL FOR THE SURVEY TEAM TO GO INTO THE FIELD EARLY IN 1974, AND TO PRODUCE THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS BY MID-YEAR. "EVERYONE INVOLVED IN THIS PROJECT IS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT ITS POTENTIAL," HE SAID, "AND WE HAVE HIGH HOPES THAT THE SURVEY WILL ESTABLISH THE PRACTICAL BASIS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRAINING CENTER WHICH CAN BECOME A MODEL FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENTAL

PROGRAMS." END TEXT. KISSINGER

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